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AN AUSTRALIAN STANDARD FOR THE TRAINING AND USE OF PRIVATE CONTRACTED SECURITY AND DETECTION DOGS

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to your Inquiry into an Australian Standard for the Training and use of Private Contracted Security and Detection Dogs. The Police Federation of Australia (PFA) is the national body representing the professional and industrial interests of Australia's more than 63,000 police officers, across all state, territory and the federal police jurisdictions.

The PFA notes the Committee's Terms of Reference in relation to this Inquiry, particularly as it applies to "...the potential benefits of introducing a National Standard".

The benchmark for police dogs, police dog handlers and the care of police dogs, is set in the **ANZPAA Education and Training Guidelines for Police Dog Handlers** (under the auspices of the Australia New Zealand Council of the Police Profession (ANZCoPP)). For obvious reasons, this Guideline is not available for public access, but can be made available through an access request and ensuing risk assessment process.

A Diploma of Public Safety (Police Dog Handling – General Purpose/Specific Order) previously existed as part of the Police Training Package. This qualification was not re-submitted for endorsement as the ANZPAA Guidelines were felt to sufficiently address

jurisdictional education and training requirements. This approach was endorsed by ANZCoPP in 2015.

It should also be recognised that the selection and breeding of police dogs are not included in the Guidelines as jurisdictions have individual requirements for selection based on the unique environment of each jurisdiction.

The PFA notes that the proposed standard for the training and use of private contracted security and detection dogs has been discussed with Standards Australia, who we understand, may have some role in such standards development.

Although Standards Australia develops standards, they do not enforce, regulate or certify compliance of standards. They define standards as *'voluntary documents that set out specifications, procedures and guidelines that aim to ensure products, services and systems are safe, consistent, and reliable.'*

The PFA also notes that Dog Force Australia (DFA), who have proposed the development of these standards, suggest as the rationale for their development, the need to outsource dog handling capabilities and that national standards are required to facilitate such outsourcing.

The PFA's inquiries with jurisdictions, as to the possible outsourcing of such capabilities, is not something under active consideration. One particular issue of concern to police forces, would be the access that a 'contracted dog handler' may have to classified information within that policing environment or area of operation.

The PFA is of the view, that any standard, for "private contracted security and detection dogs" that may be recommended as a result of this committee, would be different to those already set by police for their use and would have no application for police dogs or police dog handlers.

Our concerns primarily relate to the possible development of a standard for private contracted security and detection dogs, that could have the potential to be imposed as a de-facto standard on the operation of police dogs and their handlers and could cause confusion as a benchmark for dog handlers. This would be of particular concern if not fully understood in the context of some future commission of inquiry.

Sincerely yours

Scott Weber
Chief Executive Officer
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